

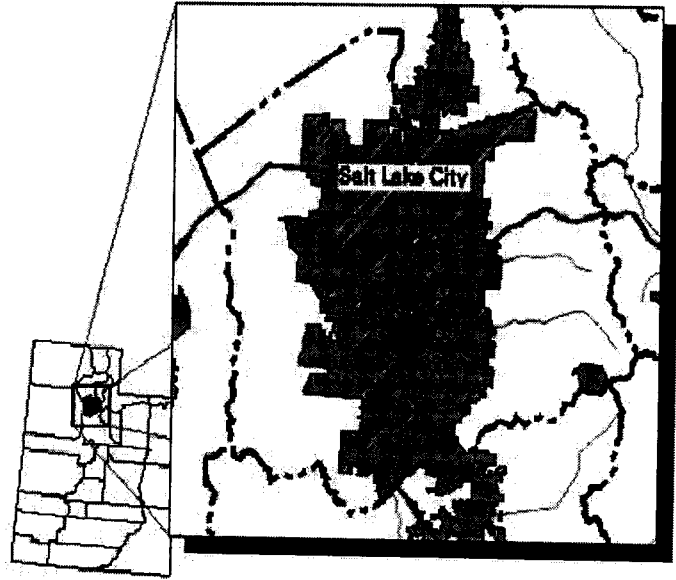
Sharon Steel Corporation



Midvale, Utah
Salt Lake County

Congressional District #2

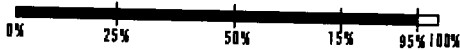
EPA ID# UTD980951388



U.S. EPA Region 8, Denver, Colorado

April 1999

Construction 95% Complete



ABOUT THE SHARON STEEL CORPORATION SITE ...

Sharon Steel, a former milling facility just south of Salt Lake City, covers approximately 270 acres in Midvale, Utah. The site was found to contain millions of tons of hazardous wastes, posing a threat to human health and the environment. For these reasons, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added it to the Superfund National Priorities List in 1990. It and Midvale Slag, another Superfund site, are adjacent to each other.

Local, state and federal agencies, industry and community members are working together to clean up site contamination.

BACKGROUND

Milling and smelting operations in Midvale began in 1905. The smelter closed in 1958, and the milling operations ended operations in 1971. The milling process extracted compounds of lead, copper, zinc and other metals. The wastes from this process resulted in an estimated 10 million tons of mine tailings, piled 40-50 feet deep, on the site.

In 1982, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ) quickly became involved at the site when it learned that nearby residents were gathering tailings for use in gardens and children's sandboxes. The state tested the "sand" from the gardens and sandboxes and found high levels of lead. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) tested the ground water and found high levels of arsenic.

With this information, EPA and the UDEQ began investigating potential human health and environmental effects from contamination at the site. These studies found the ground water to be contaminated with heavy metals, such as arsenic, iron, manganese and zinc.

Wetlands on the site contained heavy metals and zinc tailings. Site soil also was contaminated with heavy metals, including lead, arsenic, cadmium and zinc.

The greatest potential public health threat to people was exposure to lead and arsenic through direct contact with or inhalation of contaminated soils, including dust. Children playing in nearby neighborhood soils or sandboxes were especially at risk. EPA and UDEQ, together with community members, worked cooperatively to clean up the site.

CLEANUP PROGRESS

In 1989, EPA began interim cleanup actions to control the most immediate risks. These actions included fencing the site, stabilizing the banks of the Jordan River and spraying the tailings to control blowing dust.

After EPA listed the site on the NPL, Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Studies were conducted to find out how much and what types of contamination exist at the site and the potential human health and environmental effects. This information was used to evaluate alternatives for cleaning up the site. In 1990 and 1993 EPA issued Records of Decision, which presented EPA's selected methods for cleaning up the site. In 1992 and 1993, EPA dismantled the old mill building.

Since 1993, UDEQ has been performing cleanup in the contaminated residential areas of Midvale. To date, more than 600 properties, mostly residential yards, have had contaminated soil removed, replaced with clean soil, and then have been re-landscaped. The final two properties were completed in the fall of 1998.

In 1995 UDEQ began capping the tailings and reclaiming areas surrounding the tailings pile. This capping project, the largest of its kind in North America, is essentially complete.

As part of the capping project, ground water monitoring wells were installed on the perimeter of the site to ensure that metals-contaminated ground water is not migrating from the site. EPA began monitoring these wells during the summer of 1997, and results show elevated levels of metals in the ground water along the western boundary of the site, near the Jordan River. However, monitoring of the Jordan River, where the ground water discharges, shows no measurable impact.

It is likely that this contamination is a temporary condition that results from the disturbance of the tailings during the capping project. EPA and the State will continue monitoring the wells before establishing whether any additional response action is necessary.

EPA also has been working with potential developers on redevelopment options at the site. Potential land uses being discussed include a golf course for the capped area, as well as a hotel, commercial and residential use for the surrounding reclaimed areas. EPA plans to begin the delisting process in spring 1999.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members of the neighborhoods surrounding Sharon Steel play an active and important role in site cleanup. A community group received a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) from EPA to hire a technical advisor to review site-cleanup plans and keep the community informed about related issues.

EPA and the State chair a community forum that meets quarterly and provides timely updates of site-cleanup activities at both Sharon Steel and Midvale Slag Superfund sites to community members. It also gives the community input into site decisions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

More detailed information about the site is available for your review at:

Tyler Branch Library
315 South Wood
Midvale, UT 84047

Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ)
Division of Environmental Response and Remediation
168 North 1950 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

EPA Superfund Records Center
999 18th Street, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202-2466
(303) 312-6473
or 1-800-227-8917 ext. 6473 (in Reg. 8 only)

or contact:

Stan Christensen
Remedial Project Manager
U.S. EPA
999 18th Street, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202-2466
(303) 312-6694
1-800-227-8917 ext. 6694 (in Reg. 8 only)
Email: christensen.stan@epa.gov

Diana Hammer
Community Involvement Coordinator
U.S. EPA
(303) 312-6601
or 1-800-227-8917 ext. 6601 (in Reg. 8 only)
Email: hammer.diana@epa.gov

Steve Poulsen
State Project Officer, OU-2
UDEQ
168 North 1950 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84116
(801) 536-4238
Email: egdomain.egerr.spoulsen@state.ut.us

Kathy Grundhauser
Community Involvement Coordinator
UDEQ
168 North 1950 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84116
(801) 536-4486
Email: kgrundha@deg.state.ut.us

Citizens for a Safe Future for Midvale City
Verdon Walker, President
156 Olympus
Midvale, UT 84047
(801) 240-3354

[Return to Top of this Fact Sheet.](#)